New Year's resolutions we'd like to see

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Body

At the turn of every year, we on the Star's editorial board suggest a few resolutions that public figures might want to adopt to make the coming 365 days better than the previous ones.

As you can tell from the garbage year that was 2017, with its rising tide of hate and looming nuclear war, people don't tend to listen.

Nevertheless, undaunted as usual by the absence of desire for our advice, we offer this recipe for a less hellacious 2018.

Justin Trudeau: Resolve to find a new vacation spot. Sure, Bells Cay, the private island belonging to the religious leader, billionaire and registered lobbyist the Aga Khan, is lavish and beautiful. And, of course, you have a known soft spot for sunny ways.

But given that your yuletide trip to the island contravened Canada's conflict-of-interest law and contributed to a larger narrative about your government's cosiness with billionaires, you might want to consider an alternative. We understand your finance minister has a lovely villa in the south of France ...

Bill Morneau: Resolve to spend time with the hoi polloi. Want to understand why your failures to adequately distance yourself from your considerable finances or, yes, to disclose information about your villa in Provence are not mere "distractions," as you claim?

Find an ordinary Canadian and ask. They'll be more than happy to explain that your important talk of tax fairness will ring hollow as long as you and your fellow ultra-rich appear to be exempt.

Andrew Scheer: Resolve to break up with the Rebel - actually. After winning the Tory leadership, you vowed to stop granting interviews to the far-right news organization, which was then under fire for its not-entirely-negative coverage of neo-Nazis.

But the Rebel's objectionable editorial policies didn't stop you from hiring one of the outlet's directors, Hamish Marshall, as your campaign manager. You have promised a positive vision for Canada's future, one that unites rather than divides the country. The Rebel, meanwhile, sometimes runs columns that seem to deny the Holocaust happened. Do these seem consistent to you?

Donald Trump: Resolve to lie more. The startling compendium of mendacity compiled this year by the Star's Washington bureau chief and presidential fact-checker, Daniel Dale, shows that since taking office you've uttered more than 1,000 falsehoods.

Sure, this debases your country's political discourse and undermines American democracy - but your wanton disregard for truth is also having another, more felicitous effect. Polls show that two-thirds of Americans don't believe your fabrications - and roughly the same proportion disapproves of your presidency. Keep it up in 2018!

Men: Resolve to stop sexually harassing people. It's so important - and really not that difficult.

Kathleen Wynne: Resolve to go out, if you are indeed going to go out, with a bang, not a whimper. At this time last year, your support was hitting record lows. But as you enter this election year you're seeing a notable resurgence, no doubt in part because of the significant push finally to become the "social-justice premier" you once promised to be.

In particular, your government's labour reforms, including a significant minimum-wage hike, and your plan for partial pharmacare are important steps toward a more just and prosperous Ontario. You even have Patrick Brown talking like a progressive. Don't stop now.

Daylight Saving Time: Resolve to disappear. Another year promises another two time changes, which in turn promise yet more danger and misery - and for what? Studies show that, by messing with our sleep patterns, time changes significantly increase the risk of heart attack, stroke, depression and sleep disorders - not to mention the massive toll DST takes on our economy in the form of lost productivity.

Enough! Please be gone and let us join the sensible 79 per cent of the global population who are already free of your foolishness.

Beverley McLachlin: Resolve to enjoy the writer's life. As you retire after nearly three decades as chief justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and prepare to publish your first novel this year, we are confident you will bring the skills that defined your remarkable judicial career to bear in your literary pursuits as well.

The key to good judging, you once said, is empathy, to "put yourself in the shoes of the different parties, and think about how it looks from their perspective." That, of course, is also the key to good fiction. Plus, like judges, writers often work in robes. You'll be great.

Jagmeet Singh: Resolve to hit the books. Your charisma, sartorial style and positivity propelled you to the NDP leadership, but you haven't always shown an enthusiasm for that pesky other part of politics: public policy. Study up.

Halfway through their mandate, the Liberals have left themselves vulnerable on the electorally all-important left. You can ensure that the battle for the progressive terrain over the next two years is a rich policy competition, not a contest between empty slogans and nice suits.

Beings of Trappist-1: Resolve to make room for us. Your planetary system, discovered by an international research team early last year, appears to be among the most Earthlike ever examined. Scientists say life may well exist on at least a few of your seven planets. After another overheated, super-storm-beset year here on Earth - one in which the global community took as many steps backward as forward on climate action - it seems we're pretty committed to destroying our own planet. Do you mind if we crash on one of yours? After all, you're only 39 light-years away. We can be there in 800,000 years!

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